

Good Afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of passage of HB 6998.

My name is Timothy Reinke. I am a resident of the beautiful Quiet Corner. I am a retired Law enforcement officer, disabled in the line of duty. As a result of my injuries, I very often need the use of a cane, walker or electric chair. At times I must rely on the assistance of family and friends due to my limitations. I am a trained as a Master Wildlife Conservationist, hold a CT Wetlands Certificate and volunteered for 7 years on my town Wetlands Commission with one year as Chairman. I currently facilitate an online forum for CT Outdoorsman with almost 500 members.

In one way or another, i have devoted a large part of my life to helping my fellow man and being a good steward of nature. I am currently unable to enjoy and be out in nature with the same ease as the able bodied citizen. My chair will not traverse rough trail, mud and smallest of stones.

The passage HB 6998 would create very unique parcel of land as it pertains lovers of the outdoors and the handicapped.

This parcel is rich in native flora and fauna. Some wooded trails and river side trails already exist and could be easily expanded to enable wheelchair access and maintained by volunteers.

My vision is a place where folks in chairs can bait their sons hook, go for a roll on our own thru the woods on smooth trails created and maintained by volunteers, throw a line in the water, or just sit in the meadow and write poetry.

Any existing state park areas that designated as handicapped accessible are also open to the general public. These are nice places, but due their ease of access, they are often crowded and tend to be overused by the masses.

HB 6998 could create a special place that could be exclusive to the disabled, so that we may enjoy the same access as able bodied citizens and connect with Nature.

I respectfully request that you pass HB 6998 and designate this small area as the States first Handicapped Only Recreation Park Area.